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NOVEMBER 3.

Mr. THOS. MEEHAN, Vice-President, in the chair.

Twenty-five persons present.

Virulence of the Common Parsnip.—Mr. MEEHAN referred to the deaths of some children, at Danville, Pa., in the spring of 1884, reputed to be caused by eating the roots of the wild parsnip. This was usually understood to mean the roots of *Cicuta maculota*, or perhaps *Conium maculatum*. Roots had been sent to him by the attendant physician, among which was the fragment of a portion that one of the dead children had partially eaten, with teeth marks on the remains. There seemed no chance for error in this case. The root, which was evidently neither of the two reputed to be virulent, was planted. It proved to be the true garden parsnip, *Pastinaca sativa*, which has become an escape from gardens in many parts of the United States. Although the evidence that the deaths were from the wild roots of the common garden parsnip appeared so conclusive, in view of the fact that there seems to be no record of such a virulent character in connection with this plant, it was thought possible there might still be some mistake, and corroborative evidence was sought for. It was found that in the cultivated form some growers are careful about weeding or working among the leaves while the dew is on them, as severe cases of poisoning have been known to result, and on large seed farms, the workmen engaged in cutting the stalks at the seed harvest, have to protect their hands and arms against contact with the juices, or they are liable to be severely poisoned in a manner similar to that from the poison vine *Rhus toxicodendron*. With these facts it seems worth placing on record what seems to be indisputable that the deaths of the Danville children were really caused by the wild garden parsnip, *Pastinaca sativa*.

NOVEMBER 10.

The President, Dr. LEIDY, in the chair.

Twenty-four persons present.

The Shape of the Hind Limb in the Mammalia as Modified by the Weight of the Trunk.—Dr. HARRISON ALLEN directed attention to the osseous characters of the posterior extremities in mammals, as determined by the weight borne. The shape of the hind limb in the majority of the forms is that best adapted for sustaining the weight of the hinder part of the trunk.

The head of the *femur* lies upon a neck which is relatively long ;